

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A paneling unit comprising:

a siding panel ~~having an attachment strip~~; and

a backing portion secured to said siding panel, said backing portion comprised of:

~~a bottom portion defining a channel;~~

~~a front surface adjacent to said siding panel; and~~

a plurality of drainage grooves on a ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion; ~~and~~

~~at least one connector groove on said first surface of said backing portion intersecting at least two of said plurality of drainage grooves;~~

wherein said plurality of drainage grooves are oriented on said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion to provide a drainage pathway for a liquid; ~~and~~

~~wherein said channel is adapted to receive an attachment strip of a siding panel of an adjacent, substantially similar paneling unit when installed.~~

2. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said plurality of drainage grooves ~~and said at least one connector groove~~ are preferential pathways for drainage

of a liquid in contact with said firstrear surface of said backing portion of said paneling unit.

3. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 426, wherein said plurality of drainage grooves and said at least one connector groove on said firstrear surface of said backing portion are hydraulically connected.

4. (original) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein each of said plurality of drainage grooves extends from an edge of said backing portion to another edge of said backing portion.

5. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 426, wherein said at least one connector groove extends from an edge of said backing portion to another edge of said backing portion.

6. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said plurality of drainage grooves on said firstrear surface of said backing portion forms at least a segment of a continuous drainage groove with a surface of a backing portion of an adjacent, substantially similar paneling unit when installed.

7. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 426, wherein at least a portion of said at least one connector groove on said firstrear surface of said backing portion forms at least a segment of a continuous connector groove with a rear surface of a backing portion of an adjacent, substantially similar paneling unit when installed.

8. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 426, wherein at least a portion of said plurality of drainage grooves and at least a portion of said at least one connector

groove on said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion form at least a segment of a continuous drainage groove and at least a segment of a continuous connector groove, respectively, with a surface of a backing portion of an adjacent, substantially similar paneling unit when installed.

9. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion is adapted to be placed adjacent to a structure covered by said paneling unit.

10. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said orientation of said plurality of drainage grooves on said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion is generally downward relative to an installed position of said paneling unit.

11. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said orientation of said plurality of drainage grooves on said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion is approximately 30° from vertical along a length of said plurality of drainage grooves.

12. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim ~~426~~, wherein an orientation of said at least one connector groove on said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion is approximately horizontal along a length of said at least one connector groove.

13. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said plurality of drainage grooves ~~and said at least one connector groove~~ are approximately 0.0625 inches deep into said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion.

14. (currently amended) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said plurality of drainage grooves ~~and said at least one connector groove~~ have a width of approximately 0.1875 inches into said ~~first rear~~ surface of said backing portion.
15. (original) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said backing portion is selected from the group consisting of foam, fiberglass, and cardboard.
16. (previously presented) The paneling unit of claim 15, wherein said foam is comprised of expanded or extruded polystyrene.
17. (previously presented) The paneling unit of claim 16, wherein said foam further comprises a chemical adapted to repel insects or bugs.
18. (previously presented) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said siding panel is comprised of plastic.
19. (previously presented) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said siding panel is comprised of a vinyl material.
20. (previously presented) The paneling unit of claim 1, wherein said siding panel is comprised of a plastic composite including cellulosic filler.
- 21-25. (canceled)
26. (new) The paneling unit of claim 1 wherein said backing portion is further comprised of at least one connector groove on said rear surface that intersects at least two of said plurality of drainage grooves.